

### REMARKS

Claims 1-28 are currently pending. Of these, claims 1, 4, and 25-28 are presently under consideration.

The Office Action includes a rejection of claims 1, 4 and 25-28 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over the Murata et al. patent (U.S. Patent No. 6,333,747) in view of the Shimoni patent (U.S. Patent No. 4,580,054). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 4 and 25-28 are patentable over the applied references at least for reasons of record. In an effort to expedite prosecution, Applicants further submit that the subject matter claimed in claims 1, 4 and 25-28 enjoys the benefit of a 35 U.S.C. § 119 foreign priority date of at least December 20, 1993, whereas the 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) date of the Murata et al. patent is April 1, 1994. It is noted that the grandparent of the Murata et al. patent (i.e., U.S. Patent No. 5,621,867) was filed under 35 U.S.C. § 371 in connection with PCT Application No. PCT/JP93/01205. Since the international application was filed on August 26, 1993, i.e., prior to November 29, 2000, the § 102(e) date of the Murata et al. patent is the date of fulfillment of the requirements of § 371(c)(1), (2) and (4) of the grandparent. (See the American Inventor's Protection Act of 1999 and H.R. 2215, Technical Amendment Act of 2002.) Thus, the § 102(e) date of the Murata et al. patent is April 1, 1994, as is evident from the face of U.S. Patent No. 5,621,867. A verified English language translation of one of the foreign priority documents (Japanese Patent Application No. 5-320247) relating to the subject matter claimed in claims 1, 4 and 25-28 is submitted herewith, in accordance with MPEP § 201.15. In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection since

the rejection relies on the Murata et al. patent as the primary reference. Allowance of claims 1, 4 and 25-28 are respectfully requested for at least this reason.

Moreover, given that independent claim 28 is generic to claims 1-6 and 25-26 it is respectfully requested that claims 2, 3, 5 and 6 be rejoined and allowed with the application.

Should there be any remaining question in connection with this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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